



Karma Cottman, Executive Director

Karma Cottman has over 20 years of experience in the violence against women field. A diverse leader, Karma is an expert in grassroots organizing, local, statewide, and national policy advocacy. Ms. Cottman joined the DC Coalition as Executive Director in 2010 and in 2014, she launched Ujima: The National Center on Violence Against Women in the Black Community.

During her tenure with the DC Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Karma has changed the way that the District approaches responding to domestic violence. Thru her leadership, over the past six years, Washington, DC has more than tripled its funding support for domestic violence agencies and District agencies have expanded services for domestic violence survivors. Local programs have received recognition from local media groups, collaborated effectively to influence public policy, and increased partnerships with fellow non-profit service organizations.

Recognizing the need for greater mobilization to address the needs of Black women, survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault, Ms. Cottman partnered with colleagues to launch the National Center on Violence Against Women in the Black Community and in 2015 was awarded a grant to serve as the HHS funded resource center addressing black women and family violence. Ujima was established out of a shared commitment to creating a world where Black women and girls live free from violence.

Prior to her time with DCCADV, Ms. Cottman was employed at the National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV). As the Vice President of Policy and Emerging Issues, Karma directed the agency's policy agenda as well as, supervised NNEDV's state coalition and housing technical assistance projects. She worked closely with national policy partners to strengthen federal legislation to effectively respond to the needs of all domestic violence survivors. Ms. Cottman also worked with federal agencies to enhance violence against women programming. She provided training and technical assistance to state and territorial domestic violence and dual domestic violence and sexual assault coalitions across the nation.

Since 1994, Karma has worked with numerous national partners to address emerging issues in domestic violence service provision and sits on several national committees. Prior to joining NNEDV, Karma served as the co-director of the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence Rural Diversity Initiative. In this capacity, she assisted with the development of a community assessment tool used to identify service gaps in numerous local Florida communities.

Ms. Cottman continues to provide national leadership regarding ensuring that violence against women of color is addressed in legislation, specifically through the Violence Against Women Act and the Family Violence Prevention Services Act. She currently serves on the Advisory Council for the Biden Foundation's Violence Against Women Pillar, Board of Directors of the National Network to End Domestic Violence, Washington DC Fatality Review Board, and the Policy Partnership for Communities of Color.